



# **Developing NSPS Performance Objectives for Legal Office Employees**

NOTE: This document is intended to assist supervisors and employees with developing appropriate NSPS objectives and it is not a substitute for that individualized process nor are the sample objectives contained in this document "mandated." This document was a starting point for the OTJAG conversion process and many examples may not be appropriate for legal offices outside of HQDA.



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The OTJAG/USALSA conversion to NSPS provides an opportunity to remind ourselves that while each Division deals with distinct and different types of issues, our similarities far outweigh our differences.

First, our military and civilian team members alike share the Army Values. Spend a moment and read the Soldiers' Creed and the Army Civilians' Creed and remind yourself of what each member of the team brings to this wonderful organization. Whether a Soldier or a civilian, whether an attorney or a member of our dedicated paraprofessional staff, everyone's contribution is critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

Second, we share the mission of providing the Army's leaders, their staffs, and individual Soldiers with accurate proactive legal advice and quality legal services on all issues affecting the Army and the Joint Force. While the type of advice or legal service might vary from Division to Division, the underlying goal for each of is the same: provide timely and professional advice so that our clients can accomplish their missions. Both of these measurements, "timely" and "professional" are critical -- one without the other is useless to our clients.

Next, each member of our OTJAG/USALSA team plays a key role in making sure that we collectively serve the needs of our clients, and NSPS will help us recognize these stellar contributions. The enclosed Draft Objectives are intended to bring our OTJAG/USALSA mission and heritage into focus as we convert to NSPS. While these objectives are designed and written to cover wide areas of our civilian employee population (Attorneys, Administrative Assistants, Paralegals, and Legal Techs/Assistants), they cannot hope to cover the vast array of specialties that are needed in order for us to succeed in our mission. It is also important to understand that the use of these objectives is not mandatory -- they are a tool that can be used or modified to fit a particular Division's need.

One such modification may be the need to delineate between employees in the same pay band with different levels of experience (i.e. novice/apprentice vs. expert/journeyman) who have the same NSPS objective. In this case, the novice/apprentice's objective might begin with the clause: "Under limited supervision...." It is also important to note that the weight and contributing factors that apply to an objective will vary from Division to Division and possibly employee to employee (e.g. "Legal Advice and Counsel" might be weighted 75% for an Adlaw attorney but only 10% for a Litigation Attorney.) Also, key terms in objectives should be discussed/defined during counseling sessions.

Finally, as your experience with NSPS grows, please don't hesitate to recommend changes to these draft objectives, or to send objectives that you have drafted for possible inclusion in this handbook. (All recommendations should be sent through Division Chiefs to the OTJAG XO.)

## **NSPS OBJECTIVES REFRESHER NUTSHELL**

### **I. Job Objectives are NOT Task Descriptions:**

Job Objectives focus on the results and contribution; describe “what” the person will accomplish; make the employee responsible for the outcome.

Task Descriptions focus on the activities or tasks completed; describe “how” the person will do the work; make the supervisor ultimately responsible for the outcome.

Specific task descriptions are appropriately discussed during employee-supervisor counseling. Likewise, brief descriptions of key terms in objectives should be discussed during counseling sessions.

### **II. SMART Job Objectives include five components:** Specific, Measurable, Aligned, Realistic/Relevant, and Timed.

**SPECIFIC** – define an observable action, behavior or achievement; link to a level of performance, frequency, percentage or other number; are specific regarding the description of the result (not the activities to achieve that result).

**MEASURABLE** – provided a method to allow tracking, recording, and validation of quality of a specific behavior, action or outcome; define “quantity” (how many), “time” (how long), “quality” (how good), and/or “resources” (how much).

**ALIGNED** – line of sight is drawn between the employee’s work, division’s goal and OTJAG/USALSA mission; objectives ensure all are working toward shared goals; all objectives in the organization pull in the same direction; supervisors should understand their own objectives before they can work with their employees to establish theirs.

**REALISTIC/RELEVANT** – objectives are achievable with the resources and personnel available, and within the available time (realistic); objectives are important to the employee and OTJAG/USALSA (relevant); responsibility must be appropriate to the employee’s salary (realistic & relevant).

**TIMED** – established start and/or end dates are defined; specific dates are preferred over relative descriptions of time; milestones can be included.

## CONTEXT OF NSPS OBJECTIVES: OUR SOLDIERS' CREED AND THE ARMY CIVILIANS' CREED:



  
**The Soldiers Creed**

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.



### **Army Civilian Creed**

**I am an Army Civilian – a member of the Army Team**

**I am dedicated to our Army, our Soldiers and Civilians**

**I will always support the mission**

**I provide stability and continuity during war and peace**

**I support and defend the Constitution of the United States and consider it an honor to serve our Nation and our Army**

**I live the Army values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage**

I am an Army Civilian

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Attorney – Legal Advice and Counsel**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

**While our attorney positions may require specialization, every JAGC military and civilian attorney is a “counselor-at-law” charged with providing proactive advice to the Army, its Commanders and Soldiers.**

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

LEGAL ADVICE AND COUNSEL: Provide accurate, timely, and proactive legal advice, measured by a comprehensive development of facts, discussion of relevant authority, and appropriate advice and/or a recommended course of action for resolution of the issue, thereby enabling the client to accomplish its mission. Work product is clearly articulated and in accordance with regulations, style manuals, court rules, and organizational guidelines, as applicable. Comply with AR 27-26, Rules of Professional Responsibility.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s)[recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Customer Focus

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Attorney – Army Representation**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Every JAGC military and civilian attorney assigned to represent the Army and its personnel in administrative or court proceedings has been entrusted with a critical responsibility that requires attention to detail and strict adherence to timelines imposed by outside entities.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

ARMY REPRESENTATION: Provide effective and responsive representation of Army interests in administrative and/or judicial proceedings, as measured by thoroughly researched and comprehensive development of facts and legal issues, appropriate case strategy, relevant and persuasive advocacy in oral and written communications, and necessary coordination with stakeholders to facilitate mission accomplishment. Comply with AR 27-26, Rules of Professional Conduct for Lawyers.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Customer Focus; Cooperation/Teamwork; Resource Management

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Attorney – Policy Development**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

JAGC military and civilian attorneys assigned to OTJAG/USALSA have a unique opportunity and responsibility in advising the Army Staff, and the Secretariat in conjunction with the Office of General Counsel, in the crafting of DA Policy.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

POLICY DEVELOPMENT: Timely and accurately formulate, review, and/or coordinate proposed legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures, enabling the Army, its leaders and personnel to accomplish their mission. Work product is forward-looking and properly formatted, reflecting thorough analysis and sound reasoning. Coordinate with necessary stakeholders to facilitate mission accomplishment. Comply with AR 27-26, Rules of Professional Conduct for Lawyers.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Cooperation/Teamwork



**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Attorney – Field Technical Support**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

JAGC military and civilian attorneys assigned to OTJAG/USALSA have the responsibility of providing assistance and advice as members of the JAGC technical chain, especially to those Judge Advocates assisting Commanders in a deployed environment.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

FIELD TECHNICAL SUPPORT: As part of the Army legal technical chain, provide accurate and timely legal and policy advice to supported personnel, wherever they may be located, measured by responsiveness to the field and proactive conveyance of subject matter expertise in an understandable and useful form, enabling field offices to accomplish their mission. Comply with AR 27-26, Rules of Professional Conduct for Lawyers.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Communication; Customer Focus

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Attorney – Supervisory Attorney**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

- 1) The mandatory DA objective must be used for supervisors of civilian employees. **THIS OBJECTIVE MUST BE ENTERED VERBATIM AND CANNOT HAVE ANY CHANGES MADE TO THE BODY OF THE OBJECTIVE.** While no changes may be made to the body of the NSPS Mandatory Supervisory Objective, it is permissible to add additional language at the end of the objective or add additional supervisory objectives.
- 2) All OTJAG/USALSA supervisory attorneys should add a sentence to the NSPS Mandatory Objective noting AR 27-26.
- 3) In addition, it may be appropriate to add language to highlight a responsibility for supervising military personnel, or to highlight the supervisory attorney's responsibility for the proactive provision of legal services. These objectives also might be appropriate for attorneys who are non-supervisory team leaders.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

MANDATORY OBJECTIVE: Execute the full range of human resources (including performance management as outlined in DoD 1400.25-M, SC1940.5.7.4) and fiscal responsibilities within established timelines and in accordance with applicable regulations. Adhere to merit principles. Develop a vision for the work unit; align performance expectations with organizational goals. Maintain a safe work environment and promptly address allegations of noncompliance. Ensure EEO/EO principles are adhered to throughout the organization. Ensure continuing application of, and compliance with, applicable laws, regulations and policies governing prohibited personnel practices; promptly address allegations of prohibited discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

CONTINUATION PAGE: DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Attorney – Supervisory Attorney Of Other Attorneys

**ADDITIONAL SUPERVISORY OBJECTIVE FOR OTJAG/USALSA SUPERVISORY ATTORNEYS: (Should add to the end of the Mandatory Supervisory Objective.)** Comply with AR 27-26, Rules of Professional Conduct for Lawyers.

**ADDITIONAL SUPERVISORY OBJECTIVE FOR SUPERVISORS OF MILITARY PERSONNEL: (Should add to the end of the Mandatory Supervisory Objective.)** Execute the full range of personnel management responsibilities for military subordinates to include developing a professional workforce through mentorship and compliance with the prescribed evaluation system.

**ADDITIONAL SUPERVISORY OBJECTIVES FOR SUPERVISORS OF ATTORNEYS: (May add to the end of the Mandatory Supervisory Objective, or add to another appropriate objective, or use as separate and additional supervisory objective.)**

**LEGAL ADVICE AND COUNSEL:** Provide oversight and mentoring to subordinate attorneys who provide legal advice, to assist and facilitate their comprehensive development of facts, discussion of relevant authority, and appropriate advice and/or a recommended course of action for resolution of the issue, thereby enabling the client to accomplish its mission.

**ARMY REPRESENTATION:** Provide oversight and mentoring to subordinate attorneys to assist and facilitate their effective and responsive representation of Army interests in administrative and/or judicial proceedings.

**POLICY DEVELOPMENT:** Provide oversight and mentoring to subordinate attorneys to assist and facilitate their in formulation, review, and/or coordination of proposed legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures, enabling the Army, its leaders and personnel to accomplish their mission.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Leadership (mandatory); Resource Management

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Administrative Assistant – Clerical Duties**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors that are critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

CLERICAL DUTIES: Provide administrative assistance to \_\_\_\_\_ by accurately and timely preparing and/or reviewing routine documents, receiving and distributing incoming mail, and maintaining files (paper and electronic). Review of routine documents will result in correction of spelling, grammatical and format errors. Files will be maintained in accordance with Army regulations and organizational guidelines.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Will vary depending on needs of Division.

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:**  
**Administrative Assistant – Office Administration**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors that are critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION: Provide administrative assistance to \_\_\_\_\_ by maintaining calendars, scheduling appointments, receiving visitors and phone calls, maintaining timecards for office personnel, preparing travel orders, vouchers, and related travel documents. Calendar will be maintained timely and accurately; supported personnel are provided with all advance materials needed for meetings/appointments. Dealings with customers will be responsive and courteous. Timecards will be accurately completed and timely submitted. Travel arrangements will be made timely and accurately in accordance with traveler's needs. Travel vouchers will be prepared and filed within three business days of receipt of information.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Will vary depending on needs of Division.

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Administrative Assistant – Suspense Monitoring**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors that are critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

SUSPENSE MONITORING: Provide administrative assistance to \_\_\_\_\_ by maintaining the suspense database, tracking award nominations and tracking personnel evaluations. Receive and promptly distribute new actions, accurately maintain suspense database, ensuring supported personnel are aware of newly established suspense dates in a timely manner. Monitor suspenses of active actions and remind supported personnel of approaching deadlines; follow up as needed ensuring no late responses. Report problems to supervisor. Accurately track evaluations and award nominations ensuring timely coordination and processing.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Will vary depending on needs of Division.

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Paralegal – Legal Research & Writing**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors that are critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

LEGAL RESEARCH AND WRITING: Provide legal research and/or writing to \_\_\_\_\_ in order to enable supported personnel to perform their mission. Assigned legal research and/or writing tasks will be conducted using available resources and results will be provided to the supported personnel in the specified manner and in a timely, accurate, and appropriately detailed manner.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Will vary depending on needs of Division.

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Paralegal – Factual Research**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors that are critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

FACTUAL RESEARCH: Provide factual research to \_\_\_\_\_ in order to enable supported personnel to perform their mission. Conduct assigned factual research tasks in a timely manner through document review (physical and electronic), witness interviews, site visits and all other appropriate means. Provide results to supported personnel in the specified manner and in a timely, accurate, and appropriately detailed manner.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Will vary depending on needs of Division.



**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Paralegal – Case/Action Management**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors that are critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

CASE/ACTION MANAGEMENT: Provide assistance in case/action management to \_\_\_\_\_, by timely, accurately, and appropriately managing workload, planning internal timelines, maintaining case management databases and files, coordinating/communicating with necessary parties, and prioritizing assigned cases/actions to facilitate the completion of assigned cases/actions.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Will vary depending on needs of Division.

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Paralegal – Lead/Supervisory Duties**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

The mandatory DA objective must be used for all supervisors of civilian employees. Few paralegals, however, are supervisors. It is more common for a paralegal to lead a team in support of Division attorneys. In such instances, it may be appropriate to add an additional objective, or add a sentence to a pre-existing objective to highlight this paralegal's responsibility for the proactive provision of services.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Objective:**

Lead co-workers in executing the paralegal functions of \_\_\_\_\_, in order to enable supported personnel to perform their mission. Ensure team provides appropriate, timely, accurate products and services during the rating cycle IAW requests, assignments, and mission requirements.

**Suggested Contributing Factor(s) [recommend the use of one, but not more than three]:**

Leadership; Resource Management

**DRAFT OTJAG/USALSA OBJECTIVE:  
Legal Technicians/Assistants**

**Background (not entered in NSPS Form):**

Our dedicated paraprofessional staff provides continuity and support in the day to day operations of the OTJAG/USALSA Divisions. Their efforts enable our military and civilian attorneys to perform their own missions. In dealing with the public, Soldiers, and other staff sections, the members of our paraprofessional staff are key ambassadors critical to the success of OTJAG/USALSA.

**Relevant Organizational Mission/Strategic Goal (entered in NSPS Form at Part B):**

JAGC Mission: Provide proactive, mission-focused legal advice on all issues affecting our Army at war and the Joint Force. Develop professional excellence and a values-based workforce.

Division Office Mission: \_\_\_\_\_.

**COMMENTS BY DRAFTING COMMITTEE:**

We have not provided draft objectives for OTJAG/USALSA legal technicians/assistants due to the varied roles they play in our mission accomplishment. Some legal technicians/assistants perform minimal administrative assistant functions in the absence of other support staff. Use of draft objectives for those functions may be appropriate in such cases, albeit with a significantly reduced “weight of the objective.” As to legal technician/assistant support to the legal work performed by the Division, it is recommended that specific objectives be written for each legal technician/assistant. If the supervisor looks to the draft paralegal objectives for guidance, any objective should be prefaced with the following: “Under significant supervision or specific direction of office attorneys or paralegals...”